

Press-Herald

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The Juvenile Criminal

Young adults knocking around in today's mixed-up world must often wonder just exactly where they fit in the scheme of things.

For generations, the magical age of 21 has been the open sesame for adulthood. On reaching that arbitrary age, the voting booths open, the legal machinery of the state and nation is available to the 21-year-old, and he is handed the responsibility for his own acts.

He can sign contracts, buy gin, and get married without asking parental consent.

Strong efforts have been made on several fronts to lower the barriers and permit young people to vote at 18. Recently a suggestion was advanced that 18-year-olds be permitted to purchase alcoholic beverages.

With all the emphasis on opening the doors of adulthood at earlier ages, it is singularly strange that practically no voice is raised about the protective mantle of anonymity that is thrown around those very few young people whose actions bring them into official periphery of law enforcement officials.

This newspaper has said from time to time that the need for withholding from print the names of teenage criminals, hoodlums, vandals, and thugs needed to be re-examined by all newspapers. On a number of occasions when the youth has been implicated in a serious crime, his name has appeared here.

After serious study of the problem, we are convinced that the public's right to know the identity of the community's young criminals is of paramount importance.

As a result of this study, the Press-Herald has concluded that it shall be the policy of the newspaper to use the names of all arrested persons whose actions go beyond the stage of mischief.

If the youngsters of 15, 16, and 17 are nearing an age where many persons think they are mature enough to vote, to buy whisky, and to make other "adult" decisions, then they are old enough to assume responsibility for their acts.

Only an overriding set of circumstances should earn the protection of anonymity, and this newspaper will be guided by that premise in the future.

NEWS SPARKS by James Dorais

Solid Citizen In a Crossfire

It is one of the cliches of life that the good, solid citizen, who minds his own business, often finds himself smack in the middle of some ideological crossfire.

Some very respectable Americans, including many Californians, are in this position right now—victims of a poorly aimed liberal attack on the use of firearms by persons of suspected motives.

With the assassination of President Kennedy fresh in mind and with crime and mob violence on the upswing, the issue of firearms control—particularly the sale by mail order—is a legitimate one.

Unfortunately, however, the legitimate issues are clouded by efforts to discredit gun owners and their shooting organizations by linking them with extremist political groups, when, in fact, there is no tie.

A principal target of the attack has been the local civilian shooting club and its members which receive firearms and ammunition for use in the marksmanship training program of the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice, an agency of the federal government, and the Director of Civilian Marksmanship.

Apparently suspecting a sinister tie between these legitimate organizations of reputable citizens and a right-wing para-military organization, former Attorney General now State Supreme Court Justice Stanley Mosk recently called for an investigation of California's hundreds of gun clubs and their thousands of sportsmen members.

What the former Attorney General overlooked, however, was that the loyalty, responsibility and reputation as a law-abiding citizen of every gun club member has been established before he is permitted affiliation with the program.

Every club receiving government arms and ammunition must be an affiliate of the National Rifle Association of America, an organization of more than 650,000 individuals whose leadership includes top people in Congress, in the military and law enforcement fields.

Each NRA club, before it is permitted affiliation, is fully investigated and certified by the Adjutant General and by the Rifle and Pistol Association of the state.

Each individual member of the NRA must be endorsed by an active member of the Association, a public official or an officer of the armed forces.

These restrictions are in place because the shooters themselves recognize their responsibilities as citizens of good repute to use the government arms and ammunition legitimately in preparing civilians for defense of the nation. They also maintain steadfastly that the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms for recreation, for self-protection and for national defense should not be abridged.

To tar this type of responsible American for political purposes is a step toward that abridgment which should not be permitted to stand unchallenged.

Opinions of Others

Since 1958, the number of serious crimes in the nation has risen 40 per cent. This is five times the population increase of 8 per cent in the same period. That is the frightening report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.—Corvallis (Ore.) Gazette-Times.



HERE AND THERE by Royce Brier

Venus Still a Maverick Subject for Long Debate

The more astronomers examine the universal phenomena, the more they find that laws exist to be broken. The universe is an elegant machine, but it is the deviations which make it fascinating.

Take the Evening Star, Venus, the third most striking object in the firmament. The ancients set great store by her serenity, little knowing she may be a maverick. Last year we sent a probe to the planet, and learned her surface temperature may be 800 degrees, but we still could not penetrate her cloud cover. It has long been suspected Venus has little or no spin (astronomers call it angular momentum) because she has a weak magnetic field.

Recently at an international astronomical session in Hamburg, it was announced radar observations suggest Venus is spinning slowly clockwise, the opposite of the counterclockwise spin of the sun and all the other planets.

Today's widely accepted theory of the creation of the Solar System is that of a primordial mass of hydrogen gas and dust, whirling counterclockwise as we see it. The sun and the planets congealed, keeping the angular momentum of the mass. Of the 31 discovered satellites in the system, most run counterclockwise with their parent planets, but two or three run clockwise. These are believed to be captured asteroids, not true moons born with the system.

If the contrariness of Venus is proved, the astronomers will have fun explaining it for decades, if not centuries. The Venus spin is very slow, 247 days, but the planet circles the sun in 225 days. (Mercury spins in its revolution time, hence keeps one face to the sun.) Another freak is Uranus. Most planetary axes are tipped moderately, but Uranus rolls almost on its side, like a basketball.

Astronomers like all of us

may look puzzled at times, but they really love deviations from cosmic law.

Two hundred of the 4000 Ranger pictures of the moon were shown at Hamburg. The day the pictures were available, scientists interpreted them as establishing that the moon has a hard surface suitable for landing in the Apollo man-on-the-moon operation.

Dr. Thomas Gold, an eminent Cornell cosmologist, doubts it. He was an original theorist holding the lunar crust may be deep in dust, in which spacecraft would sink from sight. He now says the rounded contours of the lunar depressions upheld his theory. Dr. Harold Urey is another who believes the pictures failed to show a hard lunar crust.

We may not send a probe to take the Venusian spin very soon and we may never put a man on the moon and bring him back, but we are going to have a hell of a time debating it all for a spell.

BOOKS by William Hogan

Inspector Maigret Eases Hours for His Vacation

Actually, the load of paperbacks I dumped into the car remained unread during my recent foray into the high country. I had meant to catch up with titles I had missed—Jessica Mitford's "Daughters and Rebels," Edwin O'Connor's "The Last Hurrah," which seemed ideal reading while others were glued to television coverage of a faraway national political convention. There were others—hard-core items like "The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin" and the abridged version of Sir James Frazier's "The Golden Bough," which always remain unread and add to one's guilt complex even though, perched on the rim of a Sierra granite bowl, he is presumed safe from such pressures.

It continually startles my friends that a book columnist would read on holiday. The question of what one does with his time between the morning swim and the 6 o'clock gin is so persistently asked that it might be worth public notice. I held a private Simonon festival, if anything. The book was "Five Times Maigret," an omnibus selection of five novels by the French-Belgian stylist that features Inspector Maigret, the tired, smart, middle-class Parisian cop (Harcourt, \$5.95).

Some years ago Andre

Gide noted that George Simenon, who could produce five or six novels a year at his peak in the 1930s, was the most truly "novelistic" novelist in contemporary French literature. He is an accomplished writer of thrillers, in any event, and tells you more about Parisian life and crime, in these tales than anyone else I know.

I think of Inspector Maigret as Jean Gabin, who played him in a marvelous French movie a few seasons back. He is a little stuffy—nothing like Philip Marlowe or Lew Archer or other prominent American private eyes, and certainly he is less the sophisticated policeman than most in British fiction.

I found him the ideal holiday companion—although I'd suggest spacing these delicacies. Five Maigrets at a stretch is a little too much, even as five Sherlock Holmes tales might be.

Now I know Simenon, at least, if not Sir James Frazier or even the details of Miss Mitford's unusual childhood. The ponderosa pine that seems to grow right out of the Sierra granite is probably what I shall remember—rather than Maigret's problems following the murder of a pretty gamin in Place Pigalle. Under such conditions, poor old Benjamin and others in paperback at hand didn't stand a chance of getting by me.

We Quote...

Man cannot continue to exist if he cannot live compatibly with his fellow man and beast.—Ruth Loman on cruelty to animals.

I want to wear out, not rust out.—Sister Mary Minfred in Los Angeles commenting about 50 years as a nun.

I can't understand it. He's so darn lazy at home.—Mother of 17-year-old who won 7-mile race up mountain side.

We Americans seem to have a "versus virus"—liberals vs. moderates vs. conservatives; people vs. Supreme Court; North vs. South, and so forth.—Ken Coleman, Pomona.

People jump to the conclusion that because there is instant coffee and instant this and that, instant education is possible, too.—Harold Spears, San Francisco superintendent of schools.

AFTER HOURS by John Morley

An All-Purpose Slogan For Political Campaigns

SACRAMENTO — We're hearing a lot of reference to the "American-Way-of-Life" in the current campaign. Most of the political aspirants are using the phrase as a kind of crutch to embellish their image to the voters. They had little if anything to do with it and probably few in their lifetimes will do much to improve it.

But we are all a part of this historic endorsement. It came in little pieces through the generations, through trial and error, sacrifice, blood—and the dedication of a few Americans to whom fate and time awarded a privilege and an opportunity to create the miracle.

The American-Way-of-Life means a lot of different things to a lot of people. But in one way or another it's as personal as a toothache to all of us.

It's the common man driving to work in an uncommon car. It's the citizen traveling the 50 states without a permit. It's the smile and thank you to the maid who scrubs the floor.

It's the "Merry Christmas" or "Rosh Hashana." It's the church of your choice and the God of your faith. It's the private telephone and the private bath.

It's the unopened letter delivered by the mailman. It's the Johnson or Goldwater stickers on the cars. It's the vote yes or no on Proposition X.

It's the faith in the currency without benefit of gold. It's the dig in dignity, the brother in the brotherhood of man. It's our helping hand to the whole wide

world, friend or foe. It's the Negro or white driving a Cadillac to the same drive-in. It's the Oriental elected to the U.S. Congress. It's the Star of Bethlehem, not the Star of the Kremlin.

It's the right to fail. The right to start a \$500 hamburger stand, or a \$5 million plant making ballpoint pens. It's the public school in the hands of the public, not government. It's the water free of contaminating disease. It's the rights of the majority and the minority.

It's the partnership of the races and the cultures. It's the melting pot of divergent ideas and ideals. It's the pledge of allegiance to the miracle called "The American-Way-of-Life."

OUR MAN by Arthur Hoppe

Elect Neurosis Of Your Choice

I've been reading all the polls and there's just no doubt about it: Senator Goldwater's in for the worst clobbering taken by any candidate since Mr. Harry Truman in 1948.

Of course, the poll takers have radically altered their techniques since then. They used to ask you whom you were going to vote for. But now they ask you who the heck you think you are.

You know "Do you consider yourself a radical or some other kind of nut? How much money do you make? Honestly? Do you own a beagle? A ham radio? A T.V.A.? At parties, do others shun your company? Is your present deodrant giving you all-day protection?" And so forth. In passing, they may also ask you whom you think you're going to vote for. But they figure they know you better than that.

As evidence of how this new technique works, allow me to present a tremendous journalistic coup—the first person story of a lady who actually claims to have been actually interviewed personally by an actual poll taker. In person. The account of this unique event by Mrs. Name Withheld of Address on Request follows.

"Well, it started out just like any ordinary day. I got the kids off to school and I was resting on the kitchen floor eating marzipan when the bell rings. It was 9:32. I remember looking at my watch. But little did I suspect. So I open the door and here's this gent with a goatee and a notepad.

"Mrs. Name Withheld?" he says. "I am Dr. Grusgott from Presidential Opinion Polls, Inc. Congratulations. You have been chosen as a subject."

"Imagine! Out of all the millions of people in the country they chose me. I was so excited I didn't know what to say. So I says: "I am for President Johnson."

"Tut, tut, Mrs. Name Withheld," he says. "I am not interested in your opinions. If you will kindly lie down on that couch, I will take a seat in this chair and we can get the interview under way."

"Well, I say apologetically, 'I kind of identify with President Johnson. He's just like my husband, you know?'"

"Please," he says, "let us not call the President a slob. Keep your opinions to yourself. Now then, why as a little girl did you hate pimentoes, sow bugs, your father, and anchovies?"

"So he asks me a lot of other questions which I do not wish to repeat in mixed company. Then he says that because of my Oedipal involvements with Rorschach overtones I will vote for Goldwater. I says I still like Johnson.

He says I am certainly entitled to my opinions. As long as I don't let them affect how I vote and lounge up his poll.

"So now my only problem is should I resign as Block Chairman of The Ladies for Lyndon? Or should I stick with them? And bore from within."

Well, I'm sure the new technique will work. About as well as the old technique. But when a stranger knocks on your door and asks you a lot of questions about how you're going to cast your sacredly inviolate secret ballot, I'm not surprised he sometimes comes up with the wrong answers. No, what constantly surprises me is that he gets any answers at all.

Morning Report:

For a long time I thought the situation in South Vietnam was too complicated for us Americans to understand. Now I have the feeling it's too complicated for the Vietnamese as well.

I'm not saying they're too cowardly to fight; it's just that they are confused. They don't know which way to aim. And they have too many targets.

The other day, for instance, a general with his tanks rolled up to the front door of the Communications Center and took over the government. The next day, he let go of it and went off, in a huff, to fight Communists. I hope somebody checks the back door tomorrow.

Abe Mellinkoff

WE'LL LEAVE NOTES FOR THE MILKMAN AND THE BREADMAN

AND TWO PINTS OF BLOOD AT THE RED CROSS

